

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TAIPEI 003708

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/RSP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD -  
ROBERT PALLADINO  
DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: RICE NOMINATION AND  
WASHINGTON'S CROSS-STRAIT POLICY

A) "United States' New Diplomatic Team and Future  
Changes in Cross-Strait Relations"

The centrist, pro-status quo "China Times" observed in  
an editorial (11/19):

". Will President George W. Bush's policy during his  
second term be favorable for Taiwan? While commenting  
on Bush's nomination of Condoleezza Rice as the new  
Secretary of State, many people believe that there

SIPDIS

should not be many changes [in Bush's policy]. But an  
in-depth study would show that Rice's personal traits  
as a realist would prevail over her personal traits as  
an idealist and the role Rice will play as the  
Secretary of State will also differ from her role as

SIPDIS

the National Security Advisor.

"It is generally believed that religious conservatism  
will dictate Bush's second term. Being a devout  
Christian herself, Rice also received academic training  
in international politics during the Cold War era, so  
she is clearly aware of the importance of strategic  
reality. Given the fact that the United States already  
has a lot of issues that need to be resolved, including  
the Israeli-Palestinian situation, the aftermath of the  
war in Iraq, and the crisis on the Korean Peninsula,  
there is really no need for Washington to confront  
China just for the sake of advocating democratic and  
moral values. .

"When it comes to Taiwan, [it is evident that] Beijing  
has put the focus of all its foreign relations on  
preventing Taiwan independence. Such a development  
overlaps with the United States' cross-Strait policy  
for the next four years. Learning from its experience  
over the past two years, the Bush administration must  
make sure that its mechanism `to control the rise of  
tension' [across the Taiwan Strait] will function  
accordingly. As the real policy planner for  
Washington's policy that `neither side of the Taiwan  
Strait can unilaterally change the status quo,' Rice  
will surely act very cautiously in implementing the  
policy, [and] not allow the actions of one side to  
provoke the other side to take action unfavorable [to  
the status quo]. We must say this in a very candid  
manner: in the next four years, [Washington's] pressure  
will likely fall on the Taiwan side, and the pressure  
will increase as Taiwan pushes for a new constitution.  
."

B) "Bush Needs Stability in Asia"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times"  
editorialized (11/19):

". It is generally believed that, under Rice's  
leadership, the new decision-making team will reshuffle  
the State Department to eliminate opposition and carry  
out Bush's hawkish policies.

"At the moment, Rice should review the State  
Department's China policy and handle multilateral  
relations in East Asia with caution. Moreover, she  
should adjust the methods employed by Powell, who has  
made excessive concessions to China over the past six  
months, and resume the global strategic arrangement  
adopted at the beginning of Bush's first term. .

"An important goal for Bush in reshuffling his  
administration would be to resolve long-standing battle  
between the State Department, White House and Pentagon.  
More importantly, Bush needs to redirect the US' policy  
in Asia, where it seems to have lost its direction to  
such an extent that it was hurting its allies in order  
to make goodwill gestures to its strategic competitor.

"The main forum for the US to re-establish order in East Asia will be on the sidelines of the APEC summit, where Bush will have the opportunity of speaking individually with many Asian leaders. We hope that Bush will make the best use of this opportunity to warn its competitor while re-emphasizing its commitments to allies like Japan and Taiwan."

C) "Frank Talks Essential to Security in the Strait"

Liu Kuan-teh, a Taipei-based political commentator, said in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" (11/19):

"The fact is, any speculation on whether the rotation of people dealing in Asian affairs in the new Bush Cabinet will bring about a huge change of policy toward the region would be an exaggeration. From a global and regional strategic perspective, the second Bush team will stick with the old path and pursue an even tougher campaign against international terrorism. When it comes to its influence in Asia, the new team will put North Korea on top of its priorities.

"For both policies, Washington will need Beijing to cooperate. But where does Taiwan fit into such a transforming international landscape? The US stated quite clearly in its "Six Assurances" of 1982 that it would not be a mediator between Taiwan and China, and this policy has not changed. However, the role of the mediator could be indirect. Since the growing Taiwanese consciousness has met with China's closed-door policy, Washington has no choice but to play a more positive and constructive role in securing peace and stability across the Strait.

"Therefore, initiating the resumption of cross-Strait dialogue constitutes the most urgent task for Rice's new Asian team. Since President Chen Shui-bian has suggested the establishment of a peace and stability framework, as well as a non-military buffer zone in the Taiwan Strait, the Bush administration should utilize every possible channel to encourage leaders from Beijing to go to the negotiation table. The meeting between Bush and Chinese President Hu Jintao at the APEC summit this week is the most appropriate timing for Washington to ring the bell. .

"Only through establishing frank, candid and institutionalized channels of communication between Taipei and Washington can the second Bush administration continue to uphold its commitment to the security of Taiwan."

PAAL